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SPRING COLLECTING IN NORTHERN FLORIDA.

By Annie Trumbull Slosson.

I left New York on April 12th, and reached Montgomery, Alabama, the next evening about nine. Around the electric lights near the hotel many insects were flying. I took four or five specimens of the sphinx, *Chœrocampa tersa*, one *Dilophonota obscura* and some small noctuids and geometers. *Belostoma americana* and *Cybister fimbriolatus* were numerous, and I captured one specimen of *Calosoma scrutator*. The next day was like midsummer, hot and bright. I drove out of the city eastward and found insects plentiful; around the blossoms of various shrubs, especially the dwarf horse-chestnut (*Æsculus pavia*) with its bright red flowers, were flying many Hymenoptera and Diptera, *Augochlora* and *Chrysis* with brilliant metallic tints of green and blue, *Melissodes*, *Megachile* and *Bombus*, while a few of the earlier Syrphidæ hovered around. There were many butterflies, but I made no notes concerning them and do not now recall the species. I remember taking *Eudamus lycidas*, *E. tityrus* and several other Hesperidæ. Under stones and chips I found *Anisodactylus dulcicollis*, *A. rusticus*, *Opatrinus notus*, *Chlaenius tomentosus*, *Selenophorus pedicularis* and *Platynus rubripes*. On a leaf I found one specimen of *Eupogonius tomentosus*, and around flowers *Euphoria sepulchralis*, and *Chauliognathus marginalis* both so common in Florida. Three or four species of Curculionidæ were captured, a fine *Sphenophorus* sp. the well known *Hylobius pales* of wide distribution, and a pretty little *Centrinus* on *Cratægus* sp. Resting on a leaf of Spiræa I found that lovely little member of the Cassidini, *Coptocycla guttata*, its markings shining like burnished gold, but fading into dullness soon after death. Later in the day the weather changed, and the evening was very cold. So the electric lights were quite deserted.

The next day we went by rail to Pensacola, Fla. The locality did not seem very favorable for collecting. The soil is sandy, and there is no luxuriance of vegetation. Scrub oak abounds, while that heath-like plant *Ceratiola ericoides* with its glossy, dry whorled leaves, never found except in barren, arid soil, grew everywhere. There was also a shrubby golden rod, *Solidago pauciflosculosa*, quite new to me, which seemed to thrive in the dry, hot sand. The aspect of things seemed discouraging ; there were no woods or streams near the town, no moths came to our lights in the evening, no butterflies were seen about the garden flowers, and I feared my captures would be few. But hard, persistent work day by day for a week brought me some very good things. Lepidoptera were exceedingly scarce. I took but one good moth, a pretty sphingid, *Lepisesia circeæ* Hy. Edw. This I took at midday hovering around the blue flowers of *Amsonia ciliata* one of the milkweed family. But in Coleoptera I took many rare and interesting things. On the scrub oak were found *Anthaxia quercata* and *Brachys ovata* in great numbers. The pretty red weevil *Attelabus nigripes* and one specimen of a pretty Chrysomelid, fulvous spotted with black, *Metachroma quercata*. Here also I found that tiny Coccinellid, *Exochomus contristatus*, so useful throughout the Southern States as a devourer of the orange aphis and other insect pests.

Along the sandy paths through the scrub *Cicindela unicolor* was flying and lighting just as our *C. sexguttata* does. It was the only *Cicindela* I found here, as it was so early in the season. Under boards and chips I took *Pterostichus submarginatus*, *P. fallax*, *P. faber Harpalus compar*, *Anisodactylus agilis* and *Selenophorus ellipticus*. And one day under a pile of boards in a little deserted graveyard in the suburbs I found a fine female specimen of *Helluomorpha clairvillei*. Two days after I returned to the spot and beneath the same boards took another specimen, a male. In looking over my Pensacola captures I find several of the Histeridæ, Dermestidæ, and Staphylinidæ which bear on their labels the cabalistic initials D. D. These letters do not imply that the specimens were obtained by exchange, purchase or gift from one of our numerous entomological doctors of divinity, but that they came from that rather unpleasant, but prolific hunting-ground, a dead dog. Here I found *Hister lævipes*, *Omosita colon*, *Trox foveicollis*, *Creophilus villosus*, *Atænius cylindricus*, *Necrobia rufipes* and several other species. But our very best trap for such Coleoptera is a dead snake! This never fails to furnish numerous specimens and great variety. From such ophidian mines I took *Saprinus* sp., *Dermestes vulpinus*, *Prometopia* 6–*maculatus*, and various species of *Silpha* and *Necrophorus*.

Under the bark of coniferous trees, chiefly pine, *Alaus myops* was abundant, and among them I, one day, captured a good specimen of that fine large Elater, *Agrypnus sallei*. Along a sandy bluff near the water many Hymenoptera were flying, Pompilidæ, Sphecidæ and Larridæ. Here I took *Ammophila cementaria*, *Larra americana*, *L. argentata*, *Tachysphex acuta*, *T.* sp. (probably undescribed), *Pompilus tropicus*, *P. posterus*, *Priocnemis validus* and *Prionyx bifoveolatus*. Around the blossoms of Coreopsis sp. I caught *Megachile generosa*, *M. georgica*, *Odynerus fulvipes*, *O. arvensis*, *Philanthus dubius* and many other honey-loving insects. Under seaweed along the shore I found several immature mole-crickets (*Gryllotalpa*. The water here is all salt or brackish, and I found little in the way of aquatic insects. A species of *Dineutes* was skimming about in several places. Our colored driver called them "Melonbugs" and said they smelled "jes' like watermelon." There was a good deal of hickory growing hereabouts, and upon it I found a curious larva a semi-looper, which I took for a *Catocala*. Before I could examine it carefully it drew together some leaves in the glass where I had confined it, and soon changed to a slender dark brown pupa. I brought it north with me and at Franconia in June, nearly five weeks after pupation a fine specimen of *Eubolina stylobata* Harv. emerged. I do not know whether this larva has been described. It is not included in Mr. Hy. Edwards' list. I can only say that its appearance was Catocala-like, its general color a sort of pale violet-gray, and that there were oval spots of black on the venter. I found also on hickory the weevil, *Calandra caryæ*.

From Pensacola I went to Suwanee Springs, "way down upon the S'wanee River." Here I found a very different flora and fauna, vegetation rich and luxuriant and all animal life abundant. Wild flowers were plentiful, trees and shrubs in full leafage, ground well watered, and consequently there were many insects.

On the muddy margin of the sulphur spring, *Cicindela tortuosa* was flying and lighting and I took one specimen of *C. abdominalis* among the pines in the forest. Lepidoptera were still very scarce. I have never seen such a remarkable dearth of both butterflies and moths as I noticed in Florida this spring, and I hear from other parts of the south of the same scarcity. Though I watched the lights carefully every night I saw very few moths, on most evenings not a single one. I found two or three specimens of *Harveya auripennis*, and *Panopoda carneicosta* on the walls near lights, one *Arctia michabo*, one *Parorgya* sp., a *Crocota* sp. three or four of the smaller Geometridæ and a few Pyralids—actually nothing more. But in other orders I found many rarities. Beautiful dragon flies—the "snake doctors" of the colored folk—abounded along the streams and would have delighted Dr. Lamborn by the way in which they caught and devoured unwary mosquitoes. I had the pleasure of adding from here to Mr. Calvert's wonderful collection of Odonata, two species previously lacking, *Hagenius brevistylus*, a very large species, black and yellow with smoky wings, and *Gomphus dilatatus*, a singular looking insect with long slender abdomen, widely dilated at apex. *Libellula axillena* with gay, spotted wings was abundant, as were also *L. auripennis*, *Ischnura ramburii* and *Anomalagrion hastatum*. In the wood paths were flying many "bee-flies" (Bombylidæ). I took *Anthrax lucifer* a fine large fly with body covered with yellow hair and dark smoky wings tinged with fulvous; *A. fulvohirta*, *A. agrippina*, *A. sinuosa*, *Systoechus solitus*, and the pretty little *Oncodocera laucoprocta*, with body of black velvet, just tipped with snowy white. A big "robber-fly" *Proctacanthus brevipennis* was also flying in these same paths and *Cicindela unicolor* was abundant. There were many Scarabæidæ, several looking as if any one of them might have sat for the portrait of the "tumble bug" on the cover of our Journal. I found *Canthon lævis*, *C. depressipennis*, *Onthophagus tuberculifrons*, *Copris carolina*, *Aphodius stercorosus*, *A.* sp., *Atænius cylindrus*, and *A. cognatus*. On the scrub oak I took *Cryptocephalus fulvipennis*, and *C. bevius*, besides most of the species taken in same situation at Pensacola. Running on mud near the water I found that graceful little creature *Ega sallei*, the first time I had encountered it.

Not far from the hotel, on each side of the horse car tracks leading from station, were grassy pine flats where grew many lovely flowers. The butterfly-pea (*Clitoria mariana*) is one of the most charming of the Leguminosæ, a twining plant with trifoliate leaves and large peablossom-like flowers of pinkish purple. Around these and the blossoms of *Amsonia*, *Psoralea lupinellus and Andromeda speciosa*, I captured *Oberea gracilis* and *O. ocellata*, *Amphionycha flammata*, *Lema texana* and many Hymenoptera and

Diptera. Here also on Smilax sp. I found a young larva of *Ecpantheria scribonia* and brought it home. It throve well on various herbaceous plants, journeyed with me for a week by rail, fed eagerly on New York lettuce and cabbage, and then came with me to Franconia. Here it was so obliging as to eat anything I chose to give it, dandelion, plantain, dock and other homely weeds. It grew enormously large and finally spun a flimsy, gauzy coccoon of silk, covered with a yellowish viscid substance and transformed to a large pupa of dull black, just two months from the day found it in Suwanee. The imago appeared twenty-six days later.

Under boards *Pasimachus sublævis* was common and I found with it two specimens of *Polypleura nitidus.* Other beetles found in like situations were *Cymindis planipennis*, *Tetragonodera intersectus*, and *Selenophorus palliatus.* On the window of my bedroom I took one specimen of *Euphorticus pubescens* ; on the floor of hall the pretty little *Drapetes rubricollis.*

I went by rail from Suwanee to Charleston, S. C., and did no collecting en route. At one little station in Florida, just before crossing the Georgia line, a small darkey, seeing me pick up a beetle while the cars waited, offered to collect "dem bugses" for a nickel apiece. I closed with the offer and at the end of ten minutes had spent a quarter and purchased five specimens of *Strigoderma pygmæa.* The last negotiation was concluded after the train was in motion, the little imp skipping into the car with his struggling prize, dropping it into my lap, seizing the nickel with his grimy, black fingers, and jumping from the train at the risk of fracturing his wool covered skull. We spent one day in Charleston. I went down to the Battery in the forenoon, and found a few insects on the grass and trees there. The trees were being devoured by our New York pest *Orgyia leucostigma*, the larvæ crawling about everywhere and spinning their cocoons. On blossoms of the yellow medick I took one pair of *Collops eximius* ; on a leaf *Galeruca puncticollis* and under stones several specimens of *Pterostichus sculptus*, and the ubiquitous *Anisodactysus agilis* which was abundant everywhere this season.

I am indebted to Mr. Charles Leibeck, Mr. W. J. Fox and Mr. C. W. Johnson for identifications.

My paper is already much too long, and, as I look over it, seems to have little point. I meant however, to call particular attention to what was the marked characteristic of my southern collecting this season, the wonderful scarcity of Lepidoptera.

There were brilliant electric lights at Pensacola, brightly burning lamps at Suwanee, and we watched them persistently, but nothing—or almost nothing—ever came. No day-flying moths, Geometridæ, deltoids, or microlepidoptera were seen. Even *Litosea convalescens* which takes the place there of our *Drasteria erechtea* and is generally abundant, starting up in the grass or brush, flying and lighting every instant, was almost unknown this season. I have no theory of my own to account for this state of things. But I give you one advanced by Dossy, the colored boy who sometimes acted as my charioteer. "Seems like them can'le-flies all gwine off this year to World's Fa'r."

A STRANGE FORM OF CATOCALA.

By George A. Ehrman, Pittsburg, Pa.

Catocala denussa sp. nov.

Male.—Antennæ light brown; palpi black; frontal space, (between the eyes) dark brown; thorax brown and finely scattered with ashen grey hairs, tegula edged with a light fawn color; abdomen light fawn and darker toward the tip. Upper surface of primaries: ground color brownish grey almost black with a silky caste. Similar to that in *C. antinympha* Hüb., the limbal area or space is void of having any transverse wavy lines; the reniform spot is very minute almost wanting, and the subreniform spot is similar to that in *C. antinympha*, in the middle area there are also no wavy lines; basal line light grey almost white; basal space also has no markings, the transverse anterior and posterior lines are very faint. Upper surface of secondaries: similar to those of *C. habilis* Grt., but the orange colored band of the inner space wider, hence making the median black band much narrower and more angulated.

Under surface: the same as in *Catocala habilis*, except that the outer margin of the primaries has not that light shading, but is of a pure blackish brown; the orange bands are paler and broader both on the primaries and secondaries than they are in *C. habilis*, but otherwise the same.

Habitat:—♂ in my collection, Allegheny County, Penn.

This is a strange form of *Catocala*, and seems more interesting than strange, by having the resemblance of two old and well known species; it is of the size of *C. habilis* but the characteristics of the upper surface of the anterior wings are allied to *Catocala antinympha*. At first sight it looks considerable like *C. muliercula* Gn. but is entirely distinct and has no relations with that species whatever. I hesitated at first to describe *Catocala denussa* as a species, and thought it but an extreme form of *C. habilis*, as variation has no limit in the genus *Catocala*, but when studying them side by side, I cannot be convinced otherwise, than that it is a good and reliable species.